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Use of JAQ1 (monoclonal antibody anti GPVI) as a medicament for the protection against thrombotic diseases

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## 5 Medicament for the Protection against Thrombotic Diseases

- 10 Subject of the invention is a medicament for the protection against thrombotic diseases which comprises an antibody directed against the platelet collagen receptor glycoprotein GPVI

15 Platelet aggregation is a key mechanism for normal hemostasis limiting blood loss after tissue trauma (1;2), but may lead to arterial occlusion in the setting of atherosclerosis and precipitate diseases such as myocardial infarction (3;4). Arterial thrombosis is often initiated by abrupt disruption of the atherosclerotic plaque and deposition and activation of platelets on the subendothelial layers (4;5). Although several of the macromolecular components of the subendothelial layer such as

20 laminin, fibronectin, and von Willebrand factor (vWf), all provide a suitable substrate for platelet adhesion, fibrillar collagen is considered the most thrombogenic constituent of the vascular subendothelium since it not only supports platelet adhesion but is also a strong activator of platelets (6;7). The interaction between platelets and collagen involves firstly adhesion and, subsequently, activation leading

25 to second phase adhesion, secretion, and ultimately aggregation (8;9). Besides GPIb-IX-V, which indirectly interacts with collagen via von Willebrand factor (10), several collagen receptors have been identified on platelets, including integrin  $\alpha_2\beta_1$  (11), and the nonintegrin GPVI (12). It is presently accepted that integrin  $\alpha_2\beta_1$  is the major receptor supporting platelet adhesion to collagen, whilst GPVI mediates

5 activation (13-15). The very recent cloning of human and mouse GPVI showed that  
this receptor is a 60-65 kDa type I transmembrane glycoprotein belonging to the  
immunoglobulin superfamily (16;17) that forms a complex with the FcR  $\gamma$ -chain at the  
cell surface in human and mouse platelets (14;15;18). Signaling through GPVI occurs  
10 via a similar pathway to that used by immunoreceptors (19) as revealed by the  
tyrosine phosphorylation of the FcR  $\gamma$ -chain immunoreceptor tyrosine-based  
activation motif (ITAM) by a src-like kinase (20;21). GPVI-deficient patients suffer  
from a mild bleeding diathesis and their platelets show severely impaired responses  
to collagen (12;22). Furthermore, platelets from FcR  $\gamma$ -chain deficient mice, which  
lack GPVI (15), also fail to aggregate in response to collagen (14;19) but major  
15 bleeding has not been reported to occur in these mice .

It has, therefore, been proposed that GPVI may have a central function as collagen  
receptor for activation of human platelets. In mice, similar mechanisms seem to exist  
as platelets from FcR $\gamma$  chain-deficient mice do not aggregate in response to collagen.  
The function of GPVI has been further investigated in control and FcR $\gamma$  chain-  
20 deficient mice with the first and unique monoclonal antibody (mAb) against GPVI  
(JAQ1). The hybridoma cell line secreting JAQ1 has been deposited under DSM  
ACC 2487 at the Deutsche Sammlung von Mikroorganismen und Zellkulturen GmbH  
in Braunschweig in accordance with the Budapest Treaty.

The results of these investigations can be summarized as follows:

25 On wild type platelets, JAQ1 inhibited platelet aggregation induced by collagen, but  
not PMA (phorbol-12-myristate-13-acetate) or thrombin. Crosslinking of bound JAQ1,  
on the other hand, induced aggregation of wild type, but not FcR $\gamma$ -chain-deficient  
platelets. JAQ1 stained platelets and megakaryocytes from wild-type but not FcR $\gamma$ -  
chain-deficient mice. Furthermore, JAQ1 recognized GPVI (approximately 60 kD) in  
30 immunoprecipitation and Western blot experiments with wild-type, but not FcR $\gamma$ -  
chain-deficient platelets. These results strongly suggest that GPVI is the collagen

- 5 receptor responsible for platelet activation in mice and demonstrate that the association with the FcR $\gamma$ -chain is critical for its expression and function.

Further studies clearly showed that JAQ1 cross-reacts with human GPVI and has comparable effects on human platelets as on mouse platelets (Nieswandt B,  
10 unpublished results).

Based on these results, it has now been found that a medicament is effective against thrombotic diseases if it comprises an active principle that induces an irreversible inactivation or degradation of a collagen receptor on thrombocytes. This active  
15 principle may be a chemical compound or a monoclonal or polyclonal antibody. A preferred monoclonal antibody is JAQ1 and the preferred collagen receptor is platelet GPVI. If the monoclonal antibody JAQ1 is used it should be a humanized monoclonal antibody JAQ1.

- 20 A further object of the invention is a diagnostic agent containing the labelled monoclonal or polyclonal antibody directed against the GPVI epitope, preferably as defined by JAQ1, for the determination of the expression rate of the collagen receptor GPVI. Patients with higher than normal levels will thus be recognized as being threatened by thrombotic complications, whereas patients with lower than normal  
25 GPVI levels are jeopardized by bleeding events.

The antibody JAQ1 may be labelled by any conventional method all of which are available to the expert in the field of diagnostics. It may be radio-labelled, fluorescence-labelled, enzyme-labelled or may contain any other marker which  
30 allows the detection of the antibody on cells or in tissue. The diagnostic procedure may be performed as follows:

- 5 a) a sample of diluted blood of the patient is incubated with fluorescence-labelled JAQ1 for 15 minutes at room temperature and the platelets are directly analysed by flow cytometry.
- 10 b) a sample of blood of the patient is fixed on a solid carrier and subsequently treated with the labelled antibody JAQ1 alone or in mixture with unlabeled antibody JAQ1 followed by the detection of the labelled antibody by conventional methods.

15 These and other known alternative diagnostic procedures may be performed. Most suitable is the use of fluorescence-labelled monoclonal antibody JAQ1 in flow cytometry.

The following experiments have been performed:

## 20 **Materials and Methods**

*Animals.* Specific-pathogen-free mice (NMRI) 6 to 10 weeks of age were obtained from Charles River (Sulzfeld, Germany) and kept in our animal facilities.

- 25 *Chemicals.* Anesthetic drugs xylazine (Rompun®) and ketamine (Imalgene 1000®) were delivered from Bayer (Leverkusen, Germany) and Merial (Lyon, France), respectively. Immobilized papain (Pierce, Rockford, IL, USA), high molecular weight heparin, ADP, phorbol-12-myristate-13-acetate (PMA), (all from Sigma, Deisenhofen, Germany), FITC-labeled Annexin V (Boehringer Mannheim, Germany), and collagen
- 30 (Kollagenreagent Horm, Nycomed, Munich, Germany) were purchased. CRP (GKO-(GPO)<sub>10</sub>-GKOG) (single letter amino acid code where O=hydroxyproline) and convulxin were kindly provided by S.P. Watson (Oxford, U.K). FITC-labeled convulxin was a generous gift from M. Jandrot-Perrus (Paris, France).

- 5    *Antibodies.* The rat anti-mouse P-selectin mAb RB40.34 was kindly provided by D. Vestweber (Münster, Germany). Polyclonal rabbit antibodies to human fibrinogen and vWF were purchased from DAKO (Glostrup, Denmark) and were modified in our laboratories. Rabbit-anti fluorescein isothiocyanate (FITC)-HRP was from DAKO. Monoclonal antibodies against the integrin  $\alpha 2$  and  $\beta 1$  subunits were from
- 10    Pharmingen. All other antibodies were generated, produced, and modified in our laboratories and have been described (23;24). Modification of antibodies: Fab fragments from JAQ1 were generated by 12-hour incubation of 10 mg/ml mAb with immobilized papain (Pierce), and the preparations were then applied to an immobilized protein A column followed by an immobilized protein G column
- 15    (Pharmacia) to remove Fc fragments and any undigested IgG. The purity of the Fab fragments was checked by sodium dodecyl sulphate-polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis (SDS-PAGE) and silver staining of the gel. F(ab)<sub>2</sub> fragments from JON/A (anti-mouse GPIIb/IIIa) were generated as described (24).
- 20    *Platelet preparation and counting.* Mice were bled under ether anesthesia from the retroorbital plexus. Blood was collected in a tube containing 10% (v/v) 0.1 M sodium citrate or 7.5 U/ml heparin and platelet rich plasma was obtained by centrifugation at 300g for 10 minutes at room temperature (RT). For determination of platelet counts, blood (20  $\mu$ l) was obtained from the retroorbital plexus of anesthetized mice using
- 25    siliconized microcapillaries and immediately diluted 1:100 in Unopette kits (Becton Dickinson, Heidelberg, Germany). The diluted blood sample was allowed to settle for 20 minutes in an Improved Neubauer haemocytometer (Superior, Bad Mergentheim, Germany), and platelets were counted under a phase contrast microscope at x 400 magnification.
- 30    *Immunoblotting.* Platelets ( $3 \times 10^8$ ) were washed three times with PBS and subsequently solubilized in 0.3 ml lysis buffer (Tris-buffered saline containing 20 mM Tris/HCl, pH 8, 150 mM NaCl, 1 mM EDTA, 1 mM phenylmethylsulfonyl fluoride, 2  $\mu$

- 5 g/ml aprotinin, 0.5 µg/ml leupeptin, and 0.5% Nonidet P-40, all from Boehringer Mannheim) for 30 min at 4°C. Cell debris was removed by centrifugation (15,000g, 10 minutes) and the whole-cell extract was run on a SDS-PAGE gel under non-reducing conditions and transferred onto a PVDF membrane. The membrane was first incubated with 5 µg/ml FITC-labeled primary antibody followed by rabbit anti-FITC-horseradish peroxidase (1 µg/ml). Proteins were visualized by ECL.

*2D-electrophoresis.* Washed platelets were pelleted and resuspended in Tris 20 mM, pH 7.5, EDTA 2mM, sucrose 0.25 M. Platelets were solubilized by addition of 4 vol of Urea 8.75 M, Thiourea 2.5 M, DTT 25 mM, Triton X100 1.25 % and ampholytes 3-10, 0.75%. Two-dimensional gel electrophoresis (2D-E) was carried out as described (25). Briefly, IEF was carried out with commercially available immobilized pH gradient (linear pH gradient 3-10, 7 cm length), using the Protean IEF Cell apparatus (Biorad, Marnes-la-Coquette, France). The gels were rehydrated in the presence of the samples (platelet lysates corresponding to  $5 \times 10^7$  platelets) for 16 h and focused for 20.000 Vh. After IEF, the gel strips were incubated at room temperature in solutions containing DTT and then iodoacetamide as described (26). The gels were then subjected to the second-dimensional run and silver stained.

*Aggregometry.* To determine platelet aggregation, light transmission was measured using prp (200 µl with  $0.5 \times 10^6$  platelets/µl). Transmission was recorded on a FibrinTimer 4 channel aggregometer (APACT Laborgeräte und Analysensysteme, Hamburg, Germany) over ten minutes and was expressed as arbitrary units with 100% transmission adjusted with plasma. Platelet aggregation was induced by addition of collagen (5 - 50 µg/ml), PMA (50 ng/ml), or ADP (10 µM).

*Flow cytometry.* Heparinized whole blood was diluted 1:30 with modified Tyrodes-HEPES buffer (134 mM NaCl, 3.04 mM  $\text{Na}_2\text{HPO}_4$ , 2.9 mM KCl, 12 mM  $\text{NaHCO}_3$ , 20 mM HEPES, 5 mM glucose, 1 mM  $\text{MgCl}_2$ , pH 6.6) and left for 30 min at 37°C prior to stimulation. Samples were stimulated with the indicated concentrations of ADP or



- 5 CRP for 2 min at RT, stained with fluorophore-labeled mAbs for 10 min at RT, and directly analyzed on a FACScan (Beckton Dickinson, Heidelberg). Flow cytometric analysis of Annexin V-FITC binding to resting and activated (combination of 50 µg/ml collagen and 0.01 U/ml thrombin) platelets was measured according to the instructions of the manufacturer.

10

- In vivo experiments.* Antibodies (in 200 µl PBS) were injected intraperitoneally. Thromboembolism induced by collagen and epinephrine: Mice were anesthetized by intraperitoneal injection of 150 µl of a mixture of 0.08% xylazine base (Rompun, Bayer, Germany) and 1.6% ketamine (Imalgen 1000, Merial, France). Anesthetized mice received a mixture of collagen (0.8 mg/kg) and epinephrine (60 µg/kg) injected into the jugular vein (27). The incisions of surviving mice were stitched, and they were allowed to recover. Necroscopy and histological studies were performed on lungs fixed in 4% formaldehyde and paraffin sections were stained with hematoxylin/eosin. Bleeding time experiments: Mice were anesthetized and 3 mm of tail tip was amputated with a scalpel. The tail was then blotted with filter paper every 15s until the paper was no longer blood-stained (28). Where necessary, bleeding was manually stopped at the 10 min-time point to prevent death. Experiments were conducted in accordance to the regulations of the local authorities.

- 25 *Immunohistochemistry.* Acetone-fixed cryosections (6 µm) were blocked (5% normal goat serum, 5 mg/ml bovine serum albumin, BSA in PBS) for 30 min at RT. HRP-conjugated p0p1 (anti-mouse GPIb-IX (23)) was added at a final concentration of 2 µg/ml for 90 min and the AEC substrate was added after the three washing steps. The sections were then counterstained with hematoxylin.

30

*Platelet adhesion.* Collagen (2 µg) in 100 µl PBS was immobilized on F96-MaxiSorp plates (Nunc, Wiesbaden, Germany) at 4°C overnight. The plates were then saturated with 1 mg/ml BSA in PBS for 3 h at 37°C and washed with PBS. Washed

5 platelets in Tyrode's-albumin buffer ( $10^6$  / well) were incubated in the wells for up to 45 min. The plates were washed three times with PBS and then incubated with HRP-labeled anti-GPIb-IX (p0p1) for 30 min at room temperature, and TMB was added to each well after 3 washing steps. The reaction was stopped by addition of 2 N  $H_2SO_4$  after 10 min. Absorbance at 450 nm was recorded on a Multiskan MCC/340 (Labsystems, Lugano, Switzerland).

The results can be summarized as follows:

15 In the current study, we investigated the antithrombotic effects of JAQ1 in vivo. Injection of JAQ1 (100  $\mu g$ ) caused mild and transient thrombocytopenia with a maximum drop of platelet counts of approximately  $34 \pm 7.4$  % on day 1 and a return to normal after 72h where they remained for at least 11 more days (Fig.1a). Injection of higher (200  $\mu g$ ) or lower (50  $\mu g$ ) doses had comparable effects on platelet counts (Fig.1a). The transient drop of platelet counts was not Fc-dependent as Fab fragments of JAQ1 had similar effects (Fig.1b). JAQ1-treated mice did not show any signs of anaphylactic reactions as known to be induced by anti-GPIIb/IIIa mAbs (30) and did not develop spontaneous bleeding for at least three weeks. JAQ1 was immunohistochemically detectable on splenic and bone marrow-derived megakaryocytes 3 h after antibody injection, demonstrating that the mAb reached these cells in both organs.

*JAQ1 treatment abolishes platelet responses to collagen and collagen related peptides ex vivo for at least two weeks*

30 The effect of JAQ1 on circulating platelets was studied ex vivo at different time points after antibody injection. The basal surface expression of the major glycoprotein (GP) receptors GPIIb/IIIa and GPIb-IX-V, CD9, and integrin  $\alpha_2\beta_1$  was unchanged as compared to control platelets at 3, 7, and 14 days after antibody injection (Table 1). At no time after antibody injection did circulating platelets show any signs of activation, as demonstrated by the lack of surface bound fibrinogen and surface

5 expressed P-selectin (Table 1). On days 3, 7, and 14, platelets from JAQ1-treated mice were resistant towards activation with the collagen related peptide (CRP up to 30 µg/ml), which is known to be a strong GPVI-specific platelet agonist (31) (Fig.2a). In contrast, ADP induced normal activation (fibrinogen binding) of these platelets. Furthermore, platelets from JAQ1-treated mice were completely resistant to  
10 activation with collagen at concentrations of up to 50 µg / ml ex vivo and this profound inhibitory effect also lasted for at least 14 days upon a single injection of 100 µg JAQ1 (Fig.2b). In contrast to collagen, ADP and PMA induced normal aggregation of these platelets, indicating that JAQ1 specifically blocked GPVI-dependent platelet activation pathways whereas other functions were not affected. In  
15 vitro, saturating concentrations of JAQ1 (20 µg/ml) only displayed a limited inhibitory effect on collagen-induced platelet aggregation which could be overcome when collagen concentrations higher than ~7 µg/ml were used (Fig. 2c), confirming earlier results (29).

#### 20 *JAQ1 induces the loss of GPVI on circulating platelets in vivo*

The discrepancy between the inhibitory effect of JAQ1 on collagen-induced aggregation in vitro and ex vivo was surprising and suggested that mechanisms other than pure blockage of an epitope on GPVI must be involved. Therefore, the next step was to test platelets from JAQ1-treated mice for the presence of GPVI in a Western  
25 blot analysis of whole cell lysates. As shown in Fig. 3a, GPVI was not detectable in platelets from JAQ1-treated mice for at least 14 days upon a single injection of JAQ1, whereas GPIIb was present in normal amounts at any time point. In contrast, in all mice tested, new platelets expressing functional GPVI were detectable after 28 days. To further assess the absence of GPVI on platelets from JAQ1-treated mice, we  
30 used the GPVI-specific snake venom toxin convulxin (32). As shown in Fig. 3b, convulxin did not induce aggregation of platelets from JAQ1-treated mice on day 3, 7, and 14, whereas it induced aggregation of control platelets in the presence or absence of saturating amounts of JAQ1. Furthermore, flow cytometric analysis demonstrated that FITC-labeled convulxin did not bind to platelets from JAQ1-treated

5 mice (Fig. 3c). Finally, the absence of a ~ 60 kD protein with an isoelectric point of  
5.6 in the platelets from JAQ1-treated mice was confirmed by 2-D gel  
electrophoresis. Together, these results strongly suggested that GPVI had been  
irreversibly inactivated and removed from these platelets in vivo.

10 *JAQ1-induced GPVI loss occurs rapidly in vivo and is Fc-independent*

To examine the mechanisms underlying the loss of GPVI, mice were injected with  
biotinylated JAQ1 and the amount of surface-bound mAb was determined by flow  
cytometry ex vivo at early time points after injection. Interestingly, as soon as 6 hours  
after injection only very low levels of surface-bound JAQ1 were detectable and the  
15 signals further decreased to control after 24 and 48 h while JAQ1<sup>FITC</sup> and Cvx<sup>FITC</sup>  
bound to the platelets at no time point. These data suggested that the JAQ1-GPVI  
complex had been cleared from the surface of those platelets within 6h. In contrast,  
platelets from mice injected with a biotinylated mAb against GPV (24) constantly  
yielded positiv staining with FITC-labeled streptavidin. In the next step, we tested  
20 whole cell lysates from platelets of JAQ1-treated mice for the presence of GPVI and  
the biotinylated mAb. JAQ1 was strongly detectable in platelets 6 h after injection  
whereas signals markedly decreased at 24 h and even more at 48 h. A similar picture  
was found for GPVI, strongly suggesting that the JAQ1-GPVI complex had become  
internalized and was degraded within two days. In contrast to its in vivo effects, JAQ1  
25 did not induce any detectable downregulation of surface GPVI within 6 h incubation  
at 37°C on washed platelets or in whole blood (heparinized or citrated), indicating  
that a second signal may be required to induce this effect and that this signal is  
absent in vitro.

30 To determine whether the Fc part of JAQ1 or its divalent form is required for  
internalization/ degradation of GPVI, mice received 100 µg Fab fragments of the mAb  
and the platelets were tested for the presence of GPVI after 48 h. The Fab  
fragments, like the intact IgG, induced the complete loss of GPVI from circulating

- 5 platelets and the cells were completely resistant towards activation with CRP, collagen, or convulxin.

*GPVI-depleted platelets display reduced adhesion to collagen and abolished collagen-dependent procoagulant activity*

- 10 It is currently thought that GPVI is the platelet collagen receptor for activation, whilst integrin  $\alpha_2\beta_1$  and GPIb-V-IX (via vWF) mediate adhesion. As shown before (Table 1), the basal surface expression of both receptors was not influenced by the JAQ1 treatment. Further experiments demonstrated that platelets from JAQ1-treated mice bound normal levels vWF in the presence of botrocetin and thrombin induced normal
- 15 activation of  $\beta_1$ -integrins as assessed with the mAb 9EG7, which specifically recognizes the activated form of the  $\beta_1$  subunit (33) (Fig. 4a). In the next step, the adhesion of platelets from JAQ1-treated mice to collagen was tested in a static assay. As shown in Fig. 4b, the adhesion of platelets from JAQ1-treated mice was strongly reduced as compared to control platelets and was abolished in the absence
- 20 of extracellular free magnesium / calcium, strongly suggesting it to be mediated predominantly by integrin  $\alpha_2\beta_1$  (34). It is well known that GPVI is critically involved in the procoagulant response of platelets where stimulated platelets expose negatively charged phosphatidylserine (PS) at the plasma membrane which facilitates thrombin generation (35). Indeed, platelets from JAQ1-treated mice did not expose PS in
- 25 response to a combination of collagen and thrombin on day 3, 7, and 14 after antibody injection as demonstrated by the lack of Annexin V binding (Fig. 4c).

*Anti-GPVI treatment induces long-term antithrombotic protection but only moderately increased bleeding times*

- 30 The results of the previous experiments suggested that JAQ1 specifically induced complete depletion of GPVI in platelets in vivo. To examine to which extent this specific defect influenced normal hemostasis, we determined the tail bleeding times on day 7 after a bolus injection of JAQ1 (100  $\mu$ g). As shown in Fig. 5, the bleeding

5 times were significantly increased in GPVI-depleted mice compared to control mice ( $330 \pm 103$  vs.  $158 \pm 89$  sec., respectively), but consistently lower than in mice pre-treated with  $100 \mu\text{g}$  blocking F(ab)<sub>2</sub> fragments against GPIIb/IIIa (24) ( $>600$  sec.). In the next step, we examined the protective effect of JAQ1 in a model of lethal pulmonary thromboembolism induced by infusion of a mixture of collagen ( $0.8 \text{ mg/kg}$  body weight) and epinephrine ( $60 \mu\text{g/kg}$  body weight) (27). Among control mice pre-treated with irrelevant rat IgG2a, 95% (19 of 20) died within 5 min from widespread pulmonary thrombosis and cardiac arrest. In contrast, all mice pre-treated with JAQ1 ( $100 \mu\text{g}$ ) survived, irrespective of whether they had received the mAb 3, 7, or 14 days before challenge ( $n=8$  per group) (Fig. 6a). While the platelet counts in JAQ1 pre-treated mice had not been influenced significantly by the infusion of collagen/epinephrine, there was a sharp decrease detectable in control mice ( $n=8$ ) which was determined 3 min after induction of thromboembolism in a separate group (Fig. 6b). For histological examination, control and JAQ1 pre-treated (3, 7, and 14 days) mice received the same treatment in parallel experiments but the lungs were removed after 3 min. While the vast majority of large and small vessels were obstructed by platelet rich thrombi in the lungs of control mice, there were only very few thrombi detectable in the lungs of JAQ1 pre-treated mice (Fig. 6c).

Thus, it could be demonstrated that treatment of mice with a monoclonal antibody against GPVI results in profound long-term antithrombotic protection against collagen-dependent thromboembolism. These results confirm the proposed critical role of GPVI in collagen-induced activation of platelets in vivo and indicate that anti-GPVI agents might be effective in preventing arterial thrombosis induced by atherosclerotic plaque rupture, where platelets are thought to become activated mainly by the subendothelium under conditions of high shear stress (4;5;36). Among the matrix proteins which support platelet adhesion and subsequent activation, collagen has a critical role, at least in normal hemostasis as patients with defects in collagen receptors display mild bleeding disorders (12;37;38). Although the role of GPIb, GPIIb/IIIa and their respective ligands von Willebrand factor (vWF) and

- 5 fibrinogen in thrombosis are well documented (as reviewed by Z.M. Ruggeri (39)), the finding that vWF and fibrinogen double knockout mice are still able to form occlusive thrombi suggests that collagen and its platelet receptors might also have a critical role in thrombosis (40).
- 10 The profound inhibitory effect of JAQ1 in vivo was unexpected since it was based on clearing of GPVI from circulating platelets and no such specific depletion of a platelet receptor has been described to date. The complete loss of functional GPVI on circulating platelets in JAQ1-treated mice was confirmed by different approaches. Firstly, the protein was not detectable in a Western blot analysis of platelet lysates for
- 15 at least two weeks (which exceeds the normal life-span of platelets (41)). Secondly, the GPVI-specific snake venom toxin convulxin, which binds to a different epitope than JAQ1 (Fig.3b, c), did not bind to platelets from JAQ1-treated mice strongly suggesting the absence of GPVI from the platelet membrane. Thirdly, a ~60 kD protein with an isoelectric point of ~5.6 (which is similar to that described for human
- 20 GPVI (42)) is absent in the lysate of platelets from JAQ1-treated mice (Fig.4) and the same protein is absent in platelets from FcR $\gamma$  chain-deficient mice (not shown) which are known to lack GPVI (15). Most importantly, the functional platelet responses to collagen were completely abolished by JAQ1 in vivo, whereas the mAb only has limited inhibitory effects in vitro (29), (Fig.2c). These results demonstrate that JAQ1
- 25 induced the clearing of GPVI from the surface of circulating platelets in vivo. This finding is also supported by the observation that biotinylated JAQ1 was detectable in the lysates, but not on the surface, of platelets 6 h after injection and the same was found for GPVI. Furthermore, the decreasing signals for both GPVI and JAQ1 after 24 and 48 h strongly suggest that the internalized complex was degraded in the
- 30 intracellular compartments. GPVI belongs to the immunoglobulin superfamily and is closely related to immunoreceptors, some of which may become internalized when stimulated appropriately (43;44). In the case of JAQ1-GPVI it was difficult to define what the appropriate stimulus is, but it seems clear that the Fc part of the mAb is not required to induce internalization as Fab fragments produced the same effect,

5 thereby also excluding the requirement for GPVI clustering. In vitro, JAQ1 did not induce the downregulation of GPVI from the platelet membrane (Fig.5a) suggesting that a second signal may be required for the induction of this process that is provided by other cells in vivo. This assumption may be supported by the observation that JAQ1 and Fab fragments of the mAb induced transient thrombocytopenia. The  
10 reason for this is not clear, but it might be due to weak activation of GPIIb/IIIa leading to formation of loose aggregates and their temporary sequestration to the spleen where the actual loss of GPVI may occur. Recent evidence indicates that JAQ1 recognizes an epitope identical with or in close vicinity to the CRP binding site on GPVI (29) which is regarded as the major binding site for collagen on the receptor.  
15 So far, very little is known about the cellular regulation of GPVI but in the light of the current data it seems possible that occupancy of this epitope provides a signal that finally results in downregulation of the receptor.

Irrespective of the underlying mechanism, platelets from JAQ1-treated mice were  
20 completely unresponsive towards activation with high concentrations of CRP or collagen whereas they were normally activatable with ADP or PMA. This strongly suggests that JAQ1 selectively induced a transient GPVI deficiency in mice while other membrane glycoproteins, including GPIIb/IIIa, GPIb-IX-V, CD9, and integrin  $\alpha_2\beta_1$  were not affected in expression and/or function. JAQ1-treated mice had  
25 prolonged bleeding times which confirms the important role of GPVI in normal hemostasis and correlates well with the bleeding diathesis in GPVI deficient patients (12;22). Very interestingly, one GPVI deficient patient developed highly specific antibodies against the absent receptor (45) which may be difficult to explain. Based on the results presented here, however, it is feasible to speculate that this patient  
30 may suffer from an acquired GPVI deficiency, based on autoantibody-induced clearing of GPVI from her circulating platelets.

Besides its pivotal role in collagen-induced platelet activation, GPVI is also critically involved in the procoagulant reaction of platelets (46) which was confirmed by the



- 5 abolished collagen-dependent procoagulant activity of platelets from JAQ1-treated mice. This result strongly suggests that anti-GPVI treatment also modulates coagulation at sites of vascular injury. Such an anticoagulant activity has been demonstrated for GPIIb/IIIa antagonists (47), which are currently considered the most powerful inhibitors of platelet participation in thrombosis (48), as they inhibit the final
- 10 common pathway of platelet aggregation, irrespective of the agonist that stimulates the cells. It has been suggested that this more or less complete inhibition of platelet function may come with a potential safety risk as platelet aggregation is also required for normal hemostasis (49). We found that JAQ1 induced significantly shorter bleeding times than blocking antibodies against GPIIb/IIIa in mice, indicating that
- 15 GPVI-depleted platelets still contributed significantly to normal hemostasis in vivo. Although there is no clear correlation between the bleeding time and bleeding risk (50) it is tempting to speculate on the grounds of these results that anti-GPVI therapy might be associated with a relatively low risk of clinical hemorrhage.
- 20 The mechanisms of collagen-platelet interactions are complex and involve direct or indirect binding of collagen to several platelet receptors, including the GPIb-IX-V complex, integrin  $\alpha_2\beta_1$ , GPIV, GPVI, and 65- and 85-kD proteins (51). Despite its essential role in collagen-induced activation of platelets, there has been only very limited evidence for a role of GPVI in adhesion to collagen (17) which is mainly
- 25 thought to be mediated by GPIb-IX-V (via von Willebrand factor, vWf) and integrin  $\alpha_2\beta_1$ . In mice, GPVI-depleted platelets expressed normal amounts of integrin  $\alpha_2\beta_1$  and  $\beta_1$ -integrins were normally activatable which has been reported to be a prerequisite for effective binding of collagen (Fig. 4b) (52). Indeed, GPVI-depleted platelets adhered to collagen through  $\alpha_2\beta_1$ , but the extent of adhesion was strongly
- 30 reduced as compared to control platelets. A similar observation has been reported with platelets from GPVI deficient patients (12;45), indicating that GPVI may be required for normal adhesion to collagen probably by supporting the activation of  $\alpha_2\beta_1$  (53). The expression of GPIb-IX-V was not affected by the JAQ1 treatment and the

- 5 receptor bound normal levels of vWF in the presence of botrocetin (Fig. 4a). Together, these results suggest that platelet adhesion to collagen at sites of vascular injury may be reduced, but not blocked, by anti-GPVI treatment.

Very recent evidence suggests that GPVI is exclusively expressed in platelets and  
10 mature megakaryocytes (17;54) and this is confirmed by immunohistochemical studies with JAQ1. Therefore, the effects of anti-GPVI agents (like JAQ1) should be restricted to platelets and, very importantly, megakaryocytes. JAQ1 was detectable on megakaryocytes in spleen and bone marrow 3h after antibody injection, suggesting that the next generation of platelets was also affected by the mAb. This  
15 assumption may be confirmed by the fact that GPVI was not detectable in platelets for at least two weeks, although the normal life-span of mouse platelets is only approximately 4-5 days (41). Based on the estimated number of approximately  $2 \times 10^9$  platelets / mouse ( $10^9$  / ml blood) and a life span of the cells of 5 days, the GPVI molecules of  $6 \times 10^9$  platelets must be depleted to result in the absence of the  
20 receptor for 15 days. The amount of 100  $\mu$ g JAQ1 (MW: 150 kd) represents  $\sim 6.7 \times 10^{13}$  antibody molecules. Therefore,  $\sim 1.1 \times 10^4$  antibody molecules per platelet are available to bind and deplete GPVI. Since the estimated expression rate of GPVI is only  $1-2 \times 10^3$  copies/platelet (55) 100  $\mu$ g JAQ1 is sufficient to induce the observed effect.

25 Preliminary results show that a second injection of JAQ1 two weeks after the first injection has no influence on platelet counts, but prolongs the absence of GPVI on circulating platelets. This indicates that the second dose of the mAb affects newly differentiated megakaryocytes, but has no effect on circulating (GPVI-depleted)  
30 platelets. Thus, JAQ1 can be used to induce a GPVI knock out-like phenotype in mice for several weeks, allowing studies on platelet function in the absence of this critical activating receptor in vitro and in vivo.

5 Taken together, these results suggest that GPVI might become an interesting target  
for long-term prophylaxis of ischemic cardiovascular diseases and provide the first  
evidence that it is possible to specifically deplete an activating glycoprotein receptor  
from circulating platelets in vivo. These findings may open the way for the  
development of a new generation of powerful, yet safe, antithrombotics.

10

Thus, it is an object of the present invention to provide a medicament for the  
protection against thrombotic diseases which comprises an antibody against a  
platelet collagen receptor that not only blocks, but irreversibly depletes the target  
receptor. Preferably, as antibody the monoclonal antibody JAQ1 should be used. The  
15 preferred collagen receptor is platelet GPVI. Most preferred is a medicament which  
contains the respective humanized monoclonal antibody for protection against  
thrombotic diseases.

The monoclonal antibody JAQ1 can be humanized by standard methods which are  
20 well known to the experts in the field. Said humanized monoclonal antibody is usually  
administered to a patient who is jeopardized by thrombotic diseases in the form of a  
physiologically acceptable aqueous injection. Other forms of administration are not  
excluded. The monoclonal antibody will be administered in a quantity which is subject  
to the physical condition of the patient. The experienced medical doctor will have no  
25 difficulty to find out the optimum quantity of the monoclonal antibody for the intended  
purpose.

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- 5 **Table 1: Expression of glycoproteins and surface-bound fibrinogen on platelets from JAQ1-treated mice.** Diluted whole blood from the indicated mice was incubated with FITC-labeled antibodies at saturating concentrations for 15 min at RT and platelets were analyzed directly. Results are expressed as mean log fluorescence  $\pm$  S.D. for 6 mice per group.

10

	control	JAQ1 3d	JAQ1 7d	JAQ1 14d
<i>GP1Ib/IIIa</i>	321.3 $\pm$ 9.7	318.1 $\pm$ 9.4	328.7 $\pm$ 9.1	325.3 $\pm$ 9.8
<i>GP1b-IX</i>	278.9 $\pm$ 16.8	275.4 $\pm$ 18.0	269.5 $\pm$ 15.9	273.1 $\pm$ 11.4
<i>GPV</i>	165.4 $\pm$ 10.9	163.3 $\pm$ 14.1	169.1 $\pm$ 15.3	158.1 $\pm$ 10.5
<i>CD9</i>	543.8 $\pm$ 15.8	554.3 $\pm$ 14.6	549.5 $\pm$ 19.6	557.0 $\pm$ 13.0
<i>GP1a (<math>\alpha</math>2)</i>	38.2 $\pm$ 6.7	40.3 $\pm$ 6.5	35.2 $\pm$ 7.8	36.7 $\pm$ 6.2
<i>fibrinogen</i>	14.1 $\pm$ 1.7	15.0 $\pm$ 1.4	14.3 $\pm$ 1.5	14.4 $\pm$ 1.5
<i>P-selectin</i>	6.2 $\pm$ 0.8	6.5 $\pm$ 0.8	6.7 $\pm$ 0.8	6.0 $\pm$ 1.1

## 5 Legends to figures

### Figure 1: JAQ1 induces transient thrombocytopenia

Mice received purified IgG (a) or Fab fragments (b) of the indicated mAb i.p. in 200  $\mu$ l sterile PBS. Platelet counts were determined at the indicated times using an improved Neubauer hemocytometer. Results are expressed as the mean platelet count  $\pm$  SD for groups of each 6 mice.

### Figure 2: Platelets from JAQ1-treated mice do not respond to CRP and collagen

(a) Two color flow cytometric analysis of platelets from JAQ1-treated or control mice 3 days after antibody injection. Diluted whole blood was stimulated with 10  $\mu$ M ADP or 10  $\mu$ g/ml CRP for 2 min and subsequently incubated with anti-fibrinogen<sup>FITC</sup> and anti-P-selectin<sup>PE</sup> antibodies for 10 min at RT and analyzed directly. Platelets were gated by FSC/SSC characteristics and FI3 intensity (anti-mouse GPIb $\alpha$ <sup>PE/Cy5</sup>). The data shown are representative of 6 mice per group. Similar results were obtained on days 7 and 14 after antibody injection. (b) Heparinized prp from the indicated mice was stimulated with collagen (50  $\mu$ g/ml), ADP (10  $\mu$ M) or PMA (50 ng/ml). Light transmission was recorded on a FibrinTimer 4 channel aggregometer. (c) Heparinized prp from control mice was incubated with stirring in the presence of irrelevant rat IgG2a (20  $\mu$ g/ml – circles) or JAQ1 (20  $\mu$ g/ml - triangles) for 5 min before the addition of the indicated concentrations of collagen. In parallel, prp from JAQ1-treated mice was tested (squares). Results are expressed as the max. platelet aggregation  $\pm$  S.D. for groups of each 6 mice.

### Figure 3: GPVI is not detectable in platelets from JAQ1-treated mice for at least two weeks

(a) Whole platelet proteins were separated by SDS-PAGE under non-reducing conditions and immunoblotted with FITC-labeled JAQ1 (anti-GPVI) or EDL1 (anti-GPIIIa). Bound mAb was detected by HRP-labeled rabbit anti-FITC and ECL. (b)

- 5 Washed platelets from control, FcR $\gamma$  chain-deficient (FcR $\gamma$  -/-) and JAQ1-treated (day 7) mice were stimulated with 10  $\mu$ g/ml convulxin (Cvx). Control platelets were pre-incubated with irrelevant rat IgG2a or JAQ1 (20  $\mu$ g/ml) for 5 min before the addition of Cvx. (c) Washed platelets from the indicated mice were incubated with FITC-labeled convulxin (5  $\mu$ g/ml) for 15 min at room temperature and then analyzed on a
- 10 FACSscan (Becton Dickinson). The data shown are representative of 6 mice per group.

**Figure 4: Reduced adhesion to collagen and abolished procoagulant response of GPVI-depleted platelets**

- 15 (a) Platelets from JAQ1-treated mice (d 7) bind normal amounts of plasma vWF in the presence of botrocetin (2  $\mu$ g/ml – solid line). Bound vWF was detected by FITC-labeled anti-vWF antibodies (10  $\mu$ g/ml). No binding was detected in the absence of botrocetin (shaded area). Normal activation of  $\beta$ 1-integrins on platelets from JAQ1-treated mice in response to thrombin (0.1 U/ml). Resting (shaded area) or thrombin
- 20 activated (solid line) platelets were incubated with FITC-labeled 9EG7 (5  $\mu$ g/ml) for 15 min at RT and analyzed directly. (b) Washed platelets from control or JAQ1-treated mice (d 7) were incubated in collagen-coated microtiter plates in the presence or absence of MgCl<sub>2</sub> (1 mM) / CaCl<sub>2</sub> (1 mM) for the indicated times and adherent platelets were quantitated fluorimetrically. The data shown are from a single
- 25 experiment, representative of five identical experiments and expressed as the mean of triplicate readings  $\pm$  SD. (c) Flow cytometric analysis of Annexin V-FITC binding to platelets from control and JAQ1-treated (d 7) mice activated with a combination of collagen (50  $\mu$ g/ml) and thrombin (0.01 U/ml).

30 **Figure 5: Bleeding time of JAQ1-treated mice**

Bleeding times were determined in mice 7 days after injection of 100  $\mu$ g non-immune IgG2a or JAQ1 (n=15 per group). As a control, mice received 100  $\mu$ g F(ab)<sub>2</sub> fragments of JON/A (anti-GPIIb/IIIa) 24 h before the experiment (n=6). Where

- 5 necessary, bleeding was manually stopped at the 10 min-time point to prevent death. Each point represents one individual.

**Figure 6: JAQ1 induces long-term protection from intravascular thrombosis**

- 10 Thromboembolism in response to a bolus injection of a mixture of collagen (0.8 mg/kg body weight) and epinephrine (60  $\mu$ g/kg body weight). (a) Mortality in control mice and mice treated with 100  $\mu$ g JAQ1 at the indicated times before challenge. (b) Platelet counts in control and JAQ1-treated mice 3 min after infusion of collagen/epinephrine (n=8 per group). (c) Upper panel: representative histology of the lungs (original x 100); obstructed vessels are indicated by arrows. Lower panel:
- 15 immunohistochemical detection of platelets in the thrombi (original x 400). Acetone fixed frozen sections were reacted with a platelet-specific antibody (anti-GPIb-IX) and counterstained with hematoxylin. The red horseradish peroxidase reaction product shows high density of platelets in the thrombus.

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5    **Claims:**

1.     Medicament for the protection against thrombotic diseases, **characterized in that** it comprises an active principle that induces irreversible inactivation or  
10    degradation of a collagen receptor on thrombocytes.
2.     Medicament as claimed in claim 1, **characterized in that** an antibody induces an irreversible inactivation or degradation of a collagen receptor on thrombocytes.
- 15    3.     Medicament as claimed in claim 1, **characterized in that** it comprises the monoclonal antibody JAQ1.
4.     Medicament as claimed in claims 1 and 2, **characterized in that** it contains an antibody against the collagen receptor for thrombocytes GPVI.  
20
5.     Medicament as claimed in claims 1 to 3, **characterized in that** it contains the humanised monoclonal antibody JAQ1.
6.     A diagnostic agent for the determination of the expression rate of the collagen  
25    receptor GPVI, **characterized in that** it contains a labelled monoclonal or polyclonal antibody directed against the GPVI epitope, preferably as defined by JAQ1.
7.     A method for the determination of the expression rate of the collagen receptor GPVI in blood **characterized in that**  
30
  - a)    a sample of the blood of the patient is incubated with a solid carrier on which the antibody JAQ1 is fixed, washing the carrier, incubating it with a second labelled antibody JAQ1, washing the carrier again and measuring the signal of the second labelled antibody; or



5

- b) a sample of the blood of the patient is fixed on a solid carrier and thereafter treated with the labelled antibody JAQ1 alone or in mixture with the unlabeled antibody JAQ1 and subsequently the labelled antibody is detected; or

10

- c) the monoclonal antibody JAQ1 is fixed on a solid carrier and is thereafter contacted with the blood sample, which is to be tested, together with the labelled antibody JAQ1, washing the carrier and measuring the signal of the labelled antibody.

15

8. A method is claimed in claim 6, **characterized in that** it is performed using a fluorescence-labelled monoclonal JAQ1 antibody in a flow-cytometer.

9. A hybridoma cell line for the production of the monoclonal antibody JAQ1

20 which cell line carries the deposition number DSM ACC 2487.

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23. Jan. 2001

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Abstract:

15 **Medicament for the Protection against Thrombotic Diseases**

A medicament for the protection against thrombotic diseases is described that comprises an active principle which induces irreversible inactivation or degradation of the collagen receptor on thrombocytes. Antibodies, especially the humanized monoclonal antibody JAQ1, are the preferred active principle. Further a diagnostic agent for the determination of the expression rate of the collagen receptor GPVI is disclosed which contains the labelled monoclonal or polyclonal antibody directed against the GPVI epitope, preferably as defined by JAQ1.

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Fig.1

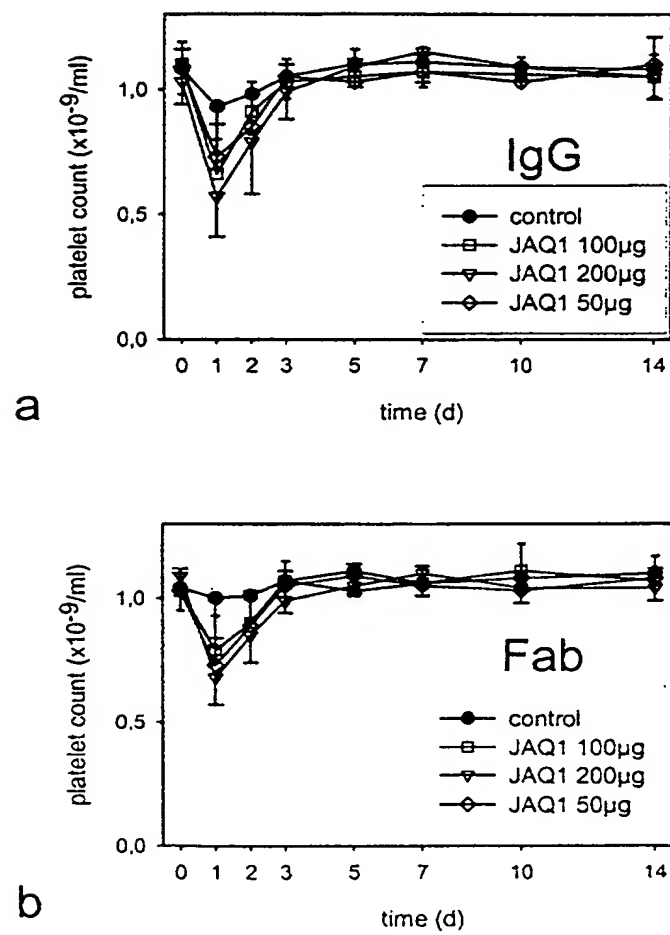


Fig.2

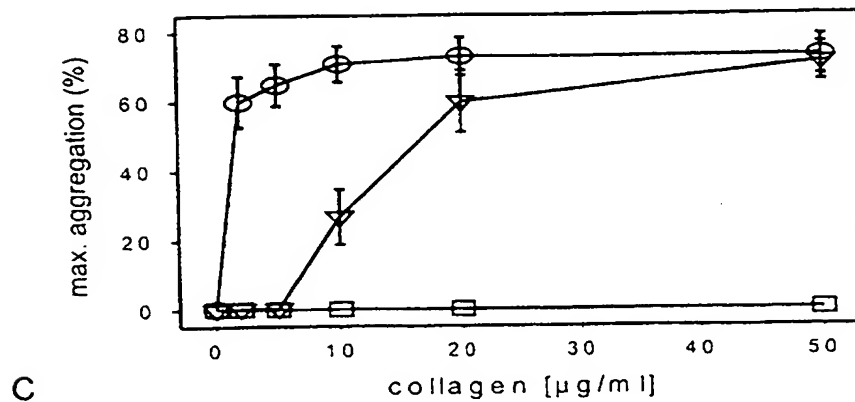
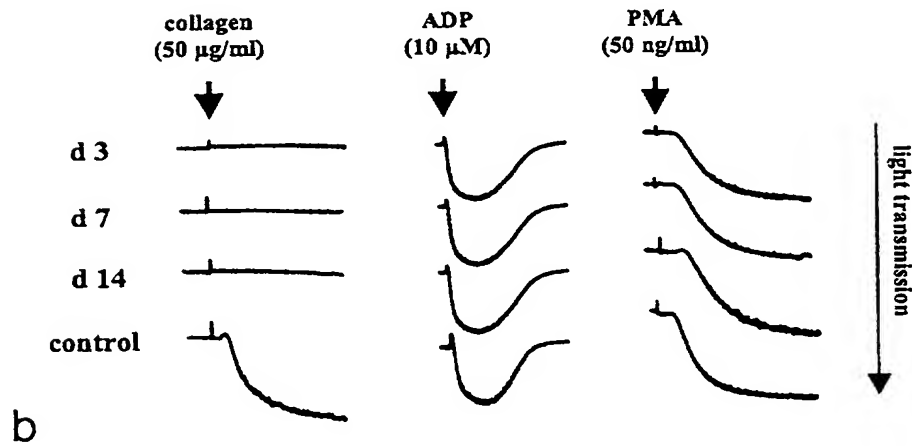
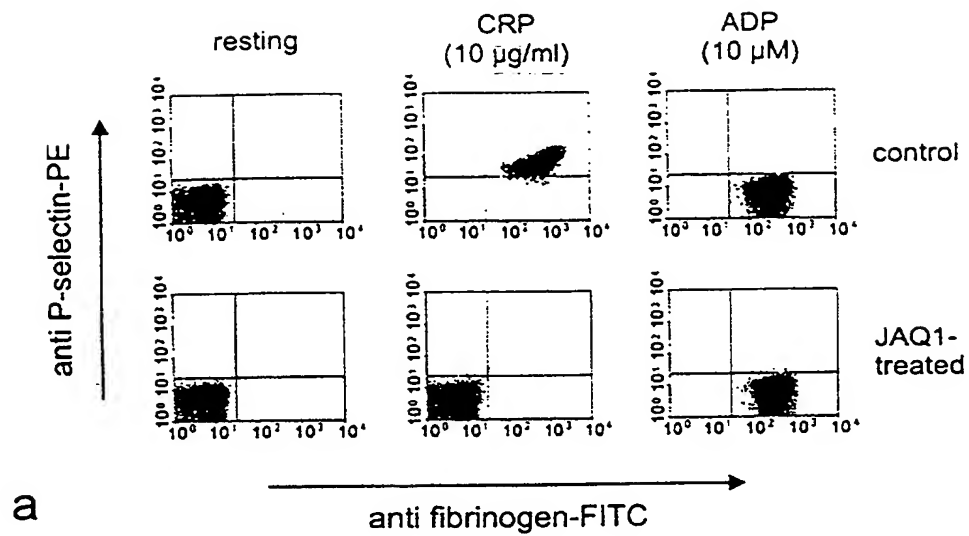


Fig.3

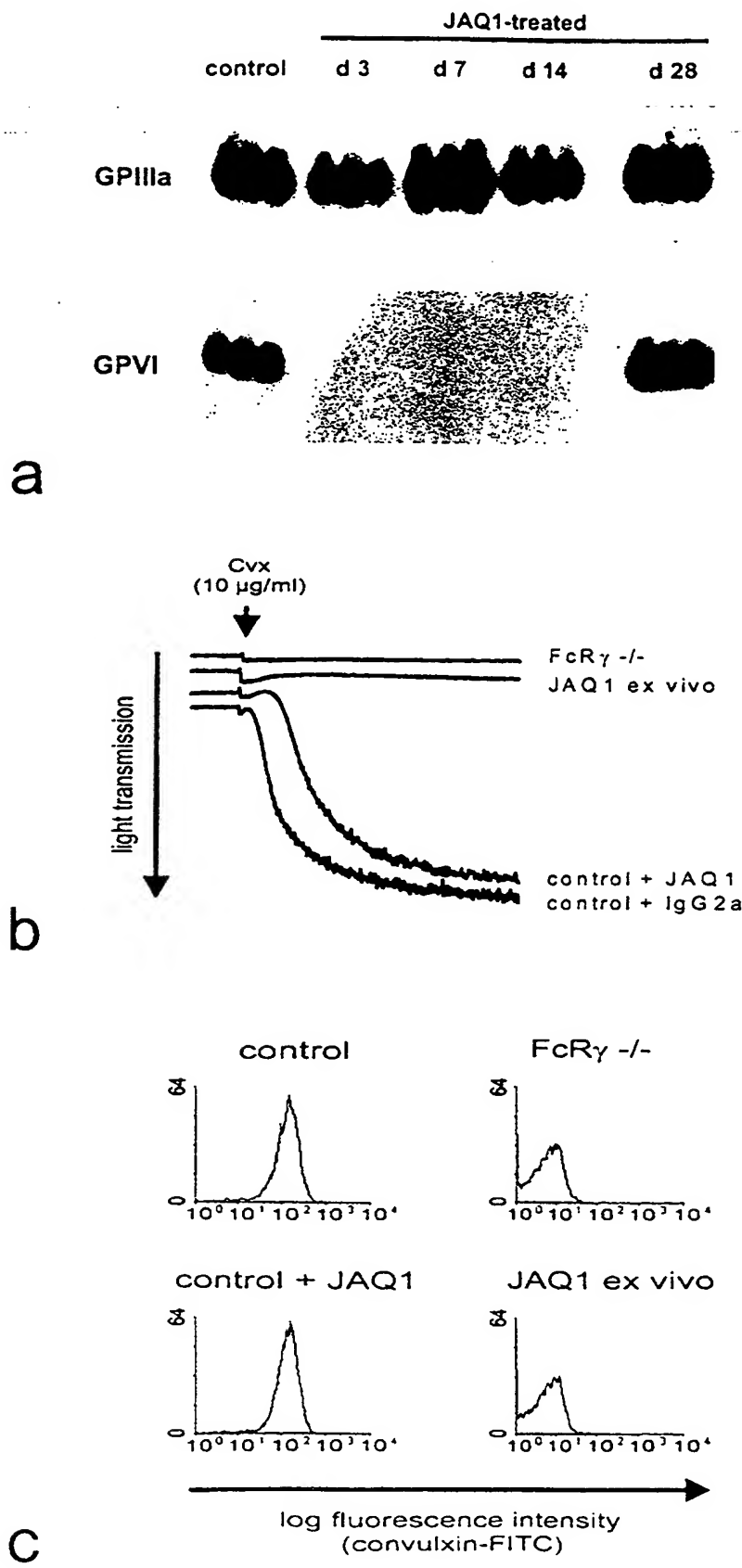


Fig.4

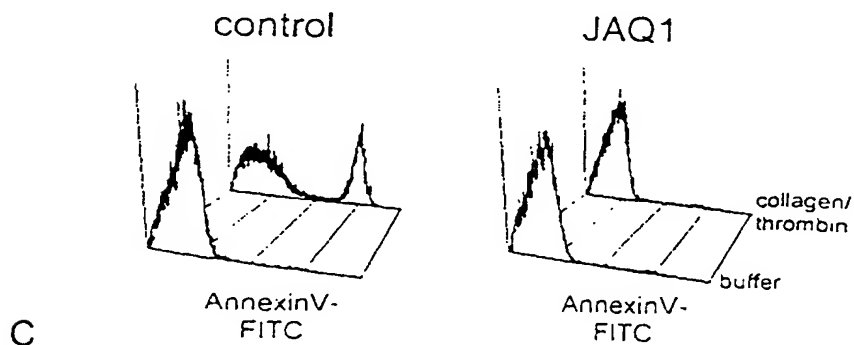
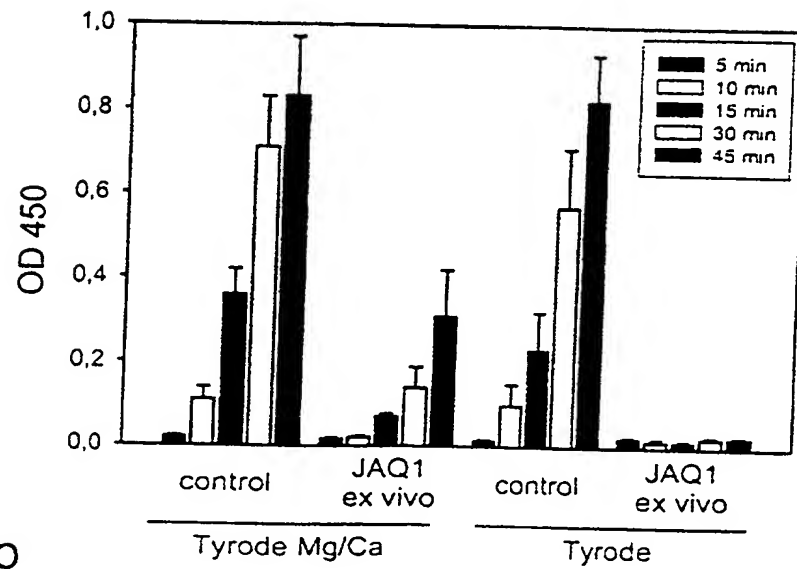
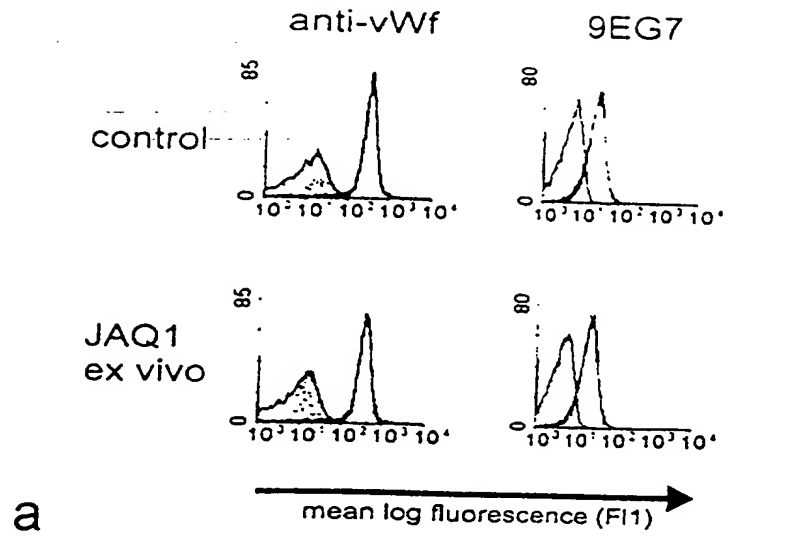


Fig.5

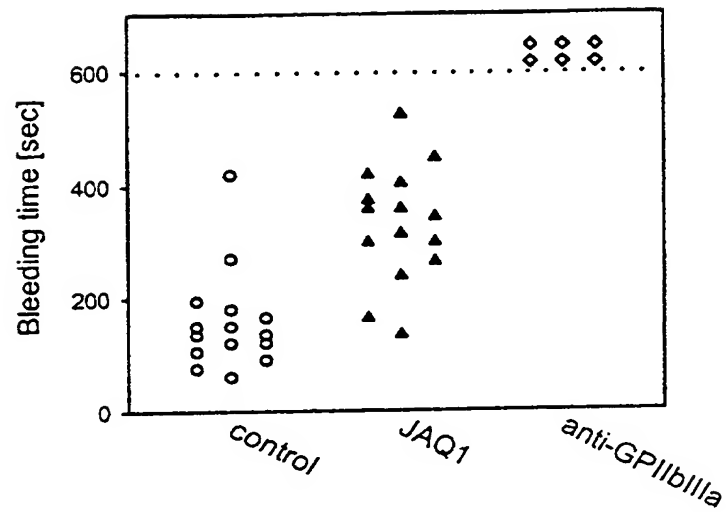


Fig.6

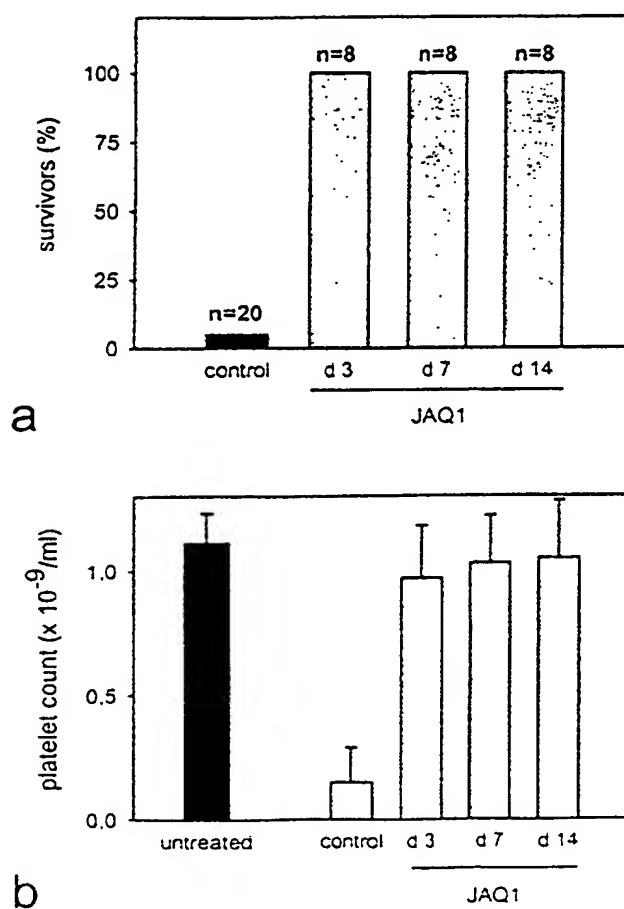
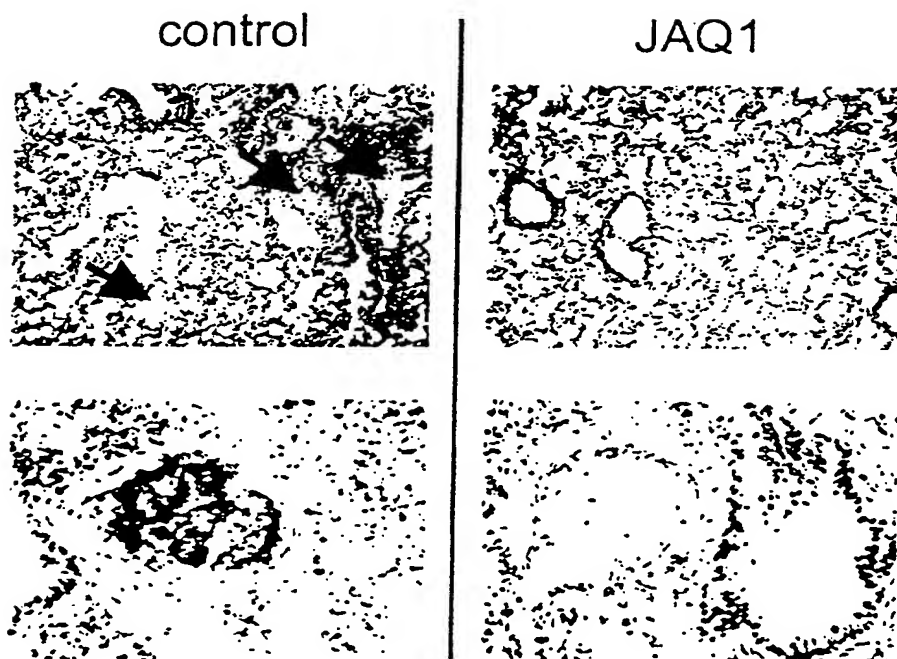




Fig.6c



C